UNITED
NATIONS

DP

Governing Council
of the
United Nations
Development Programme

Dist.
GENERAL

DP/FPA/CP/83
4 March 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-eighth session
3 - 21 June 1991, New York
Item 6 of the provisional agenda
UNFPA

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND
PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

Recommendation by the Executive Director
Assistance to the Government of Honduras
Support for a comprehensive population programme

Proposed UNFPA assistance:	$7.5 million, of which $5 million is to be committed from UNFPA's regular resources. If UNFPA's funding situation permits, the balance of up to $2.5 million may be provided by UNFPA. If and to the extent this is not the case, UNFPA will seek to cover the shortfall from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources.
Estimated value of the Government's contribution:	To be determined
Duration:	Five years
Estimated starting date:	January 1991
Executing agencies:	Government of Honduras United Nations International Labour Organisation (ILO) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Health Organization (WHO)
Government co-ordinating agency:	Ministry of Planning

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HONDURAS

Demographic facts

Population Total (000)	
Total	5,138
Males	2,592
Females	2,546
Sex ratio (/100 females)	101.8
Urban	2,240
Rural	2,899
Per cent urban	43.6
Population in year 2000 (000)	6,846
Functional age groups (%)	
Young child: 0-4	17.0
Child: 5-14	27.6
Youth: 15-24	20.8
Elderly: 60+	5.0
65+	3.3
Women: 15-49	22.7
Median age (years)	17.4
Dependency ratios: total	91.8
(/100) Aged 0-14	85.5
Aged 65+	6.3
Agricultural population density (/hectare of arable land)	1.78
Population density (/sq. km.)	46
Average annual change (000)	
Population increase	166
Births	206
Deaths	40
Net migration	0
Annual population total (% growth)	3.0
Urban	4.73
Rural	1.54
Crude birth rate (/1000)	37.1
Crude death rate (/1000)	7.2
Net migration rate (/1000)	0.0
Total fertility rate (/woman)	4.94
Gross reproduction rate (/woman)	2.41
Net reproduction rate (/woman)	2.16
Infant mortality rate (/1000)	57
Life expectancy at birth (years)	
Males	63.7
Females	68.0
Both sexes	65.8
GNP per capita (U.S. dollars, 1988)	860

Sources: Population density on arable land is derived from two publications issued by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: FAO Production Yearbook 1985 and World-wide Estimates and Projections of Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Population Segments 1950-2025, ESS/MIS/86/2; gross national production per capita: World Bank, World Development Report 1990. Figures for population, total population by sex, population by age group, age indicators, urban-rural population, and population density (/sq. km.) refer to the year 1990; figures for average annual change, rate of annual change, and fertility and mortality are the five-year averages for 1990-1995. These data are from the Population Division, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, World population prospects: 1988.

I. SUMMARY

1. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) proposes to support a comprehensive programme in the amount of $7.5 million, of which $5 million would be committed from UNFPA's regular resources, over a five-year period starting January 1991, to assist the Government of Honduras in achieving its population and development objectives. If UNFPA's funding situation permits, the balance of up to $2.5 million may be provided by UNFPA. If and to the extent this is not possible, UNFPA would seek to cover the shortfall from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources.

2. The proposed programme has been designed to fit within the Government's overall population strategy and to complement national population activities. The programme is also based on the findings and recommendations of the Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) mission carried out in October 1990.

3. The main objectives of the programme are to contribute to: (a) a decrease in the high fertility rate; (b) a decrease in maternal and child mortality and morbidity; (c) a decrease in adolescent pregnancy; (d) the improvement of the living conditions of urban marginal populations; and (e) the improvement of women's social and economic situation.

4. All projects under the proposed programme, as in all UNFPA-assisted programmes, would be undertaken in accordance with the principles and objectives of the World Population Plan of Action; that is, that population policies should be consistent with nationally and internationally recognized human rights of individual freedom, justice and the survival of national, regional and minority groups (para. 14 (d)); that respect for human life is basic to all human societies (para. 14 (e)); and that all couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so (para. 14 (f)).

II. BACKGROUND

5. Comparing the results of the 1974 and 1988 population censuses, the population of Honduras grew over this period at an annual rate of not less than 2.8 per cent. When the data are corrected for omissions, the annual growth rate rises to 3.2 per cent, according to the provisional projections made by the Population Department of the Ministry of Planning. (Official United Nations estimates are given on the fact sheet on page 2.) These figures would make Honduras one of the countries with the highest population growth in Latin America and the Caribbean. While mortality is decreasing, fertility has undergone relatively less change, and as a result the country has remained in a demographic transition phase characterized by an acceleration of the growth rate. The total fertility rate has been estimated for 1990 at 5.2 children per woman of childbearing age, which would mean a decrease of 29 per cent over the past 25 years. Preliminary data from a national study on maternal mortality indicate a level of 230 deaths per 100,000 live births. The death rate has decreased by at least 10 per 1,000 reflecting both a real decline in mortality and the effects of a prevailing very young age structure resulting from long periods of high fertility. Life expectancy is estimated at 65 years for 1990. Infant mortality is estimated at 62 per 1,000 live births.

6. Information derived from the two most recent population censuses shows considerable rural to urban migration, particularly to the two main cities, Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. It is worth pointing out that the two cities present an example of bi-polar urban concentration, something uncommon in the

urbanization process in Latin America. This process of urban concentration is taking place at the same time that there is a growing dispersal of the rest of the population, as reflected in the 1988 census, which shows that 57 per cent of the population lives in localities with less than 1,000 inhabitants.

7. Population growth is contributing to the deterioration of the environment, as the firewood and overgrazing crisis is demonstrating in various parts of the world. In Honduras, 80 per cent of total household energy demand is met by firewood and charcoal, and there is much indiscriminate felling of timber. The national forest stock has decreased by 20 per cent over the past two decades.

8. Provisional projections up to the year 2025 made by the Ministry of Planning indicate that in the year 2000 Honduras will have a population of 6.8 million, with a total fertility rate of 4.3, a life expectancy of 67, an infant mortality rate of 52 per 1,000 live births and a growth rate of 2.7 per cent. This population will already be beginning to show an incipient process of demographic aging and an expansion of the working-age population, which will place strong pressure on the labour market, particularly in urban areas.

9. Honduras is one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere, and is one of three UNFPA priority countries in the region. Extreme poverty affects over 50 per cent of the population nationally and nearly 80 per cent of the rural population. The poverty problem is aggravated by the rapid population growth. According to the World Bank, the economic performance of Honduras in 1989 reflected fundamental structural weaknesses in the economy that made long-term growth unsustainable unless a major economic programme were implemented. Real gross domestic product growth declined from 4.7 per cent in 1988 to 2.1 per cent in 1989, a rate below that of population growth.

10. The health indicators reflect acute problems, such as relatively high levels of preventable illness, lack of sanitation, inadequate diets and deficient coverage of the primary health care system. According to a 1987 nutrition survey, undernutrition affects 38 per cent of the children younger than 5 years of age. The undernutrition rate for rural areas is 42 per cent and over 55 per cent in some of the poorest areas. The primary cause of death and morbidity is diarrhea, indicating a severe sanitation problem.

11. Honduras has not adopted a population policy as such. However, a number of population units and groups have been created and have carried on activities in different sectors. In 1979, population units were established in the Ministry of Planning and in the Ministry of Education. In 1989 the National Autonomous University of Honduras created a Population Teaching and Research Unit (UDIP) within the School of Economics to provide postgraduate training. The Ministry of Health provides support to family planning as a component of maternal and child health through the reproductive risk approach.

III. REVIEW OF UNFPA AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO DATE

12. In 1978, UNFPA undertook a needs assessment mission, which led to the approval by the Governing Council of the first country programme for Honduras in an amount of $4.3 million. Based on the recommendations of a needs assessment mission undertaken in 1986, a second country programme for the period of 1987-1991 was approved by the Governing Council in an amount of $3.3 million. During this period, Honduras improved its implementation rate considerably and consistently, which led to the completion of the programme one year ahead of schedule.

13. Major achievements of this programme were the Population and Housing Census in 1988; a decrease in the infant mortality rate and the total fertility rate; the Government's use of socio-demographic information in preparing its social and economic programmes; the establishment of a Population Teaching and Research Unit in the School of Economics of the Autonomous University with a postgraduate course in Population and Development and the development of population education teaching guides for all levels of the education system.

Maternal and child health and family planning

14. The Maternal and Child Health Division of the Ministry of Health receives a large amount of international support for the development of its programmes. In 1986 this amounted to $2.3 million and has increased as a result of technical co-operation from bilateral sources, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Governments of Japan, Canada and Italy. USAID provides support to the Ministry with a project amounting to $57 million for the period 1988-1994, part of which is for activities focusing on maternal and child health including birth spacing. The United Nations agencies supporting the Ministry are the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization (WHO/PAHO) and UNFPA.

15. Family planning activities were initiated at the beginning of the 1960s with the activities of the Honduran Family Planning Association. In the public sector family planning was initiated in the 1970s, with a programme supported by USAID. This programme was discontinued in 1976 as a result of strong opposition in the country, but in 1983 the Ministry reintroduced family planning within the reproductive-risk-approach with the support of UNFPA and other international donors. In the private sector many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have conducted family planning activities, especially the Family Planning Association, which has extended its activities nationally with strong USAID support and has become the main provider of family planning services in Honduras.

16. The prevalence of contraceptive use by married women, which was 27 per cent in 1981, reached 41 per cent in 1987, with 59 per cent in urban areas and 30 per cent in rural areas. In the cities, the most prevalent method is sterilization, whereas in the rural areas the use of oral contraceptives predominates.

17. UNFPA has been providing support to the Ministry of Health since 1977 with a project for the provision of maternal and child health services and family welfare. In 1985 UNFPA approved a project aimed at expanding the coverage of services to mothers, children and women of fertile age, particularly in rural and marginal urban areas, through the primary health care approach. The project has contributed to a decrease in the infant mortality and total fertility rates. This was achieved through an increase in prenatal visits, and in deliveries assisted by qualified personnel. The latter is mainly due to the increase in the numbers of trained midwives, which also helped to increase postpartum visits. The project trained 1,500 new midwives and provided continuing education for 5,000 others. Family planning educational and clinical activities extended their coverage and helped to increase the knowledge and technical capacity of physicians, nurses and health promoters to educate the public, refer cases and provide different contraceptive methods. An important contribution of the project was the participation of organized women's groups in educational activities.

Information, education and communication

18. The Ministry of Education's long-term objectives are to incorporate population education in formal and non-formal education programmes, raise the level of awareness of population topics among the adult population, encourage responsible decision-making in family life and contribute to the integration of women in development. UNFPA has supported the Ministry in the achievement of these objectives through a project that has designed teaching guides in population education for the primary and secondary levels, for the Teacher's College and for adult education. Using various media, this project has promoted awareness and motivation regarding population topics among parents, community leaders and representatives of the Government and private sector. It has provided training for the national technical team as well as for the rural women leaders of different organizations and has established a systematic methodology for the design of educational materials and is developing a system for follow-up and evaluation of these activities.

Data collection and analysis

19. The last census was conducted in May 1988 with the support of UNFPA and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It is expected that by the end of 1990 a minimum of scheduled tabulations and related publications will have been completed. The first National Demographic Survey (NDS) was made in 1972, and the second in 1983. Both studies provided estimates of the most important indicators of demographic change. In addition, the National Epidemiology and Family Health Survey was conducted in 1987. Other types of surveys have also provided information on other aspects of population.

20. In line with the agreements signed by the Central American Governments with regard to refugee and displaced populations, UNFPA is supporting the Government's efforts to develop a national information system on displaced populations.

Population dynamics and policy

21. In conjunction with UNDP, since 1978 UNFPA has assisted the Population Unit and the Human Resources Unit within the Ministry of Planning in the development of socio-demographic studies and the incorporation of the results into the planning process. The studies have led to the identification of target groups and the definition of an evaluation methodology to assess the impact of social programmes. The information generated has been extremely useful to the Government for the formulation of its social policy, and has led to the creation of the Honduran Social Investment Fund, which is intended to mitigate the negative impact of structural adjustments.

22. UNFPA has also been assisting the Population Teaching and Research Unit in the National Autonomous University of Honduras since 1988. The Unit has found a solid base in the Faculty of Economics and within a relatively short time has earned recognition among academics and on the part of the Government for its role in training graduate students and for the quality of its publications and seminars.

Women, population and development

23. Various studies on the status of women have been conducted in Honduras, essentially on the basis of secondary data derived from the population and housing census and demographic and household surveys. The General Directorate of Statistics and Census, with the assistance of the United Nations Statistical

Office, has included a module on women in the semi-annual Multipurpose Household Survey, for the purpose of compiling information on their productive work.

IV. PROPOSED PROGRAMME 1991-1995

24. The long-range objectives of the programme are presented in paragraph 3 above. To address the most urgent population problems of Honduras today -- high fertility rate, high maternal mortality rate and the increasing proliferation of marginal areas in the cities as a consequence of displacement due to rural poverty -- a PRSD mission carried out in October 1990 recommended five global strategies as the basis for a national population programme. These are: (a) improvement of knowledge and dissemination of information on population and its relationships to development; (b) adoption of differentiated population and development policies; (c) institution building; (d) decentralization; and (e) community participation.

25. The immediate objectives of the programme are: (a) approval of a national population policy through increased awareness of population and development issues among politicians, technicians and the general public; (b) developing a MCH/FP model of service delivery based on an educational programme, decentralized planning, and the participation of NGOs and the community; (c) providing up-to-date data based on the results of the Population and Housing Census; (d) increasing national technical capacity in different sectors of the area of population and development; (e) integrating population variables in the planning of social and economic programmes; and (f) including gender issues in the planning and implementation of population programmes. One of the first activities of the proposed programme would be to develop quantitative measures of these objectives.

26. The programme strategy involves the development of actions at both national and local levels. The activities at the national level include: (a) a comprehensive approach to awareness-creation activities; (b) establishment of a central population unit to provide direction to the population programme; and (c) an analysis of the population census coupled with training activities to strengthen the national technical capacity. At the local level the programme would consist of three "demonstration projects" to serve as case studies for the implementation of broader population activities in three key areas: (a) use of socio-demographic data in decentralized development planning, focusing on the specific problem of a growing marginal urban population; (b) attention to the linkages between population and environmental problems, especially deforestation; and (c) provision of information, education and communication (IEC) and maternal and child health and family planning (MCH/FP) services through the strengthening of regional health areas, women's NGOs and community participation.

Maternal and child health and family planning

27. The programme proposes to support the Ministry of Health in the achievement of its objectives of reducing high maternal and child morbidity and mortality and increasing coverage in marginal urban and rural areas. Support would be provided for the Ministry's strategies of decentralization by including NGOs and the community in the improvement of health services, and for implementing the reproductive-risk-approach in the delivery of MCH/FP services. This would be achieved through the development of a model of MCH/FP service in a geographical area covering a marginal urban and a rural area. The target group would be women with reproductive risks, with special emphasis on adolescents.

28. The MCH/FP model would aim to strengthen the area of reproductive health in primary health care and to increase community participation through the training of traditional midwives to improve their performance. Community leaders, particularly of women's groups, and health promoters would also be trained to carry out a health education programme directed at the prevention of unwanted pregnancies and pregnancies of high-risk groups, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDs. The education programme would be based on socio-cultural research to identify educational needs and designed with the active participation of the community. This component is part of the IEC strategy that would be partly implemented through the MCH/FP sector. UNFPA would also support the training of professionals and technicians in reproductive health and family planning with emphasis on the acquisition of skills and the management of programmes.

29. The MCH/FP project would be co-ordinated with UNICEF's programme which includes an education component aimed at health workers, volunteers and midwives and a sex education component aimed at adolescents. Special efforts would also be made to co-ordinate the activities of the project with others donors, such as USAID. An amount of $3 million is proposed for this sector, of which $2 million would come from UNFPA regular resources and $1 million would be sought from other sources, including multi-bilateral resources.

Information, education and communication

30. A major priority of the IEC programme would be creation of awareness of population issues at different levels of the Honduran population. This would be undertaken primarily by the Population Teaching and Research Unit at the University (UDIP) and the Population Unit in the Ministry of Planning. UDIP would direct their activities to leaders in the economic, social and religious arena. The specific strategies proposed are the dissemination of easily accessible publications, the organization of high level conferences, seminars and workshops to discuss different aspects of population and development, and support for the Population Commission of the National Congress. The target group of the Population Unit in the Ministry of Planning would be government officials in different sectors, and it would pursue various strategies including discussion and working groups focused on the role of population in development.

31. Another important part of the IEC programme would be promotion of an environment conducive to informed decision-making with respect to reproductive behaviour. This line of action would be implemented through the development of the MCH/FP model of service in the Ministry of Health, specifically through the development of a health education programme with major emphasis on community participation and the educational role of women's organizations.

32. In order to improve human resources in the field of population, UNFPA would provide support for: (a) the Ministry of Education in incorporating population education in formal and non-formal education, and by providing assistance in the training of primary and secondary school teachers at the national level in the use of guides developed by the Ministry's Population Education Unit; (b) incorporating population education into the literacy and adult education programmes; (c) supporting the post-graduate course in population and development at the University as described in paragraph 22 above; (d) training staff in population and gender issues necessary for the planning, implementation and evaluation of projects, as discussed in the women, population and development section below (paragraphs 38 and 39); and (e) training of health professionals in reproductive health and family planning, especially in the acquisition of family planning and programme management skills as described in the section in MCH/FP. An amount of

$1.5 million is proposed for the population IEC sector, $500,000 of which would be sought from other sources, including multi-bilateral resources.

Data collection and analysis

33. The Directorate of Statistics and Census successfully carried out the Population and Housing Census in May 1988 with the support of UNDP and UNFPA. The new programme proposes to support the analysis of the census results needed for planning purposes. Support would specifically be provided for the expansion of the scope and content of tabulations, restructuring the census publication plan, and publication and dissemination of the analysis. To ensure appropriate co-ordination, support would be given for the establishment of a Technical Committee, to be led by the Ministry of Planning. A total of $500,000 is proposed in this sector, $200,000 of which would be sought from other sources, including multi-bilateral resources.

Population policy and formulation

34. Support is proposed for the incorporation of socio-demographic variables in development planning and the strengthening of national capacity in the area of population and development and in the area of population and the environment. This would be done by assisting the Population Unit of the Ministry of Planning, UDIP at the Autonomous National University of Honduras, and a selected municipality to implement a "small population programme" as a model of decentralized planning for the design, implementation and evaluation of social programmes.

35. The assistance to the Population Unit within the Ministry of Planning in formulating a population policy in Honduras would be provided in the following ways: (a) providing further orientation to the Government's planning process and identifying target groups on the basis of socio-demographic criteria, with special emphasis on poverty alleviation; (b) giving support to local municipal governments in the integration of socio-demographic variables in the planning of development programmes; (c) ensuring that the role of women is taken into account in development plans; (d) further strengthening technical and institutional capabilities in the field of population and development in the Ministry of Planning; and (e) supporting the establishment of a National Documentation Centre on Population and Development.

36. The previous UNFPA programme supported the establishment of UDIP with the long-term objective of preparing professionals capable of handling the population aspects of development in various sectors through a postgraduate training course. This Unit has been successful so far, but further support is required to ensure its consolidation. This project has already shown that the University setting is an appropriate forum for open discussions of population questions in the country. Therefore, the specific objective of creating awareness on population issues among political leaders and professionals from different sectors would be added to the tasks of UDIP as part of the IEC strategy mentioned earlier. Based on the experience gained in this activity, UDIP would also contribute to designing, in conjunction with all sectors involved, a national training plan in population and development aimed at achieving national autonomy in this field.

37. To design a model of decentralized planning, a selected municipality would be supported for the development of a "small population programme". The population programme to be developed would include: (a) establishment of a system of economic, social and demographic indicators to provide guidance for planning aimed particularly at the most vulnerable groups; (b) promotion of organized community

groups and NGOs to participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of community development programmes among marginal populations, especially in the areas of population and environment and income generation for women; and (c) development of IEC and MCH/FP activities with the objective of preventing high-risk pregnancies, based on the experience of the MCH/FP model. The amount proposed for this sector is $1.4 million, of which $500,000 would be sought from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources.

Women, population and development

38. The experience of the previous programme has shown that there is a great need to create awareness and strengthen technical capacity in relation to population and gender issues among government institutions responsible for developing population projects. Therefore, it is proposed to support personnel training as a way of strengthening the technical capacity of the National Board of Social Welfare, the institution in charge of women's programmes that is under the direct authority of the President. The training would be focused on the population issue in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of women's programmes. This area of support would be closely co-ordinated and complemented with the activities planned by UNICEF and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

39. Just as accelerated urbanization is causing degradation of the environment, deforestation is degrading the countryside, especially in the vast marginal areas around the major cities. In view of its close relation with activities such as cooking and heating usually carried out by women, a second area of support is proposed for the Honduran Social Investment Plan (FHIS). The FHIS would create jobs for women in reforestation and environmental protection activities in conjunction with an awareness and training programme on environment and population issues. Specific attention would be given to family planning education linked with service delivery. This support would be co-ordinated with all the United Nations agencies supporting the FHIS (UNDP, UNICEF, and the World Food Programme (WFP)). A total amount of $1 million would be provided for this sector, of which $300,000 would be sought from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources.

Programme reserve

40. It is proposed to establish a programme reserve of $100,000 to cover yet undetermined needs that may come up during the programme.

Programme co-ordination

41. The execution of the programme would be co-ordinated through the office of the UNFPA Representative in Honduras in conjunction with the Office of External Assistance of the Ministry of Planning and the UNFPA Country Director proposed for Honduras. This programme would also be co-ordinated with all the United Nations agencies participating in the Joint Consultative Group on Policy. UNFPA would support the Government's efforts to co-ordinate the various donors in the population area. A number of collaborative activities would be included in the proposed programme with, among others, UNICEF, UNDP and UNIFEM.

Programme monitoring, evaluation and management

42. All the projects in this programme would be monitored and evaluated in accordance with standard UNFPA guidelines and would have built-in monitoring and evaluation mechanism. A mid-programme

review would be carried out in 1993 and independent evaluations would be part of all larger and innovative projects. In his capacity as UNFPA Representative, the UNDP Resident Representative would have responsibility for the overall management of the programme. The Resident Representative would be assisted by the UNFPA National Programme Officer stationed in Honduras. The UNFPA Country Director based in Costa Rica would also provide technical and managerial assistance and guidance and would visit the country periodically.

Financial summary

43. As indicated in paragraph 1, UNFPA would provide assistance in the amount of $7.5 million, of which $5 million would be committed from UNFPA's regular resources. If UNFPA's funding situation permits, the balance of up to $2 million may be provided by UNFPA. If and to the extent this is not possible, UNFPA would seek to cover the shortfall from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources. The table below shows how the programme would accommodate the two levels of funding:

	UNFPA's regular resources	Other resources	Total
Maternal and child health and family planning	2,000,000	1,000,000	3,000,000
Information, education, and communication	1,000,000	500,000	1,500,000
Basic data collection and analysis	300,000	200,000	500,000
Population policy formulation	900,000	500,000	1,400,000
Women, population and development	700,000	300,000	1,000,000
Programme reserve	100,000	--	100,000
TOTAL	5,000,000	2,500,000	7,500,000

V. RECOMMENDATION

44. The Executive Director recommends that the Governing Council:

(a) Approve the programme for Honduras in the amount of $7.5 million for the five-year period 1991-1995;

(b) Authorize the Executive Director to commit an amount of $5 million from UNFPA's regular resources;

(c) Further authorize the Executive Director to provide the balance of up to $2.5 million from UNFPA's regular resources, if such resources are available. If and to the extent they are not, further authorize the Executive Director to seek to cover the shortfall from other sources, including multi-bilateral sources;

(d) Authorize the Executive Director to allocate the funds and make appropriate arrangements with the country of Honduras and with the executing agencies.